

AN-KELIYA.

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THERE is a short description of this Sinhalese National game in Mr. Leopold Ludovici's Paper on "The Sports and Games of the Sinhalese" (C. A. S. Journal, 1873),\* and a more detailed account of it may not be without interest. Mr. Ludovici, moreover, describes the game as it is played with elk or deer horns, a very tame affair when compared with the *an-edima* of horns made out of the roots of trees. The tug which precedes the swinging of the *henakanda*, and the art used in the arrangement of the ropes about the horns before they are hooked into one another,—two of the most important and curious features of the game,—are not described by him; while the amount of strength that is required to break an ordinary deer horn is not to be compared to that which is exerted, and often exerted in vain, to break the large and strong roots that are used in the true game. I witnessed the game once while on circuit in Uḍapalāta in the Kandy District of the Central Province, and on the third or fourth day two horns were adjusted, which not the united strength of almost all the men and boys in the village, and that not by any means a small one, could break, and which I afterwards learnt never were broken, on that occasion at least.

The *an-keliya*, as its name implies, is a game (*keliya*) played with horns (*an*). It is also called *an-edima* "horn-pulling", and *an-keli-pijāva* "the offering of the horn game." It was, and is for the most part still, a purely religious game, sacred to the goddess Pattini, and is usually

\* Note (1) d.

performed on the occasion of some epidemic ascribed to her interference. Though seldom witnessed now, it was formerly the one great national game of the Sinhalese, and was performed in many places on a scale of great magnificence, and in the presence of thousands of spectators.

I have been unable to trace out the true origin of the game, though its mythological one, as believed in Uḍapalāta at any rate, is as follows:—The goddess Pattini was out one day with her husband Pālaṅga, gathering *sapu*\* flowers. To enable them to reach the flowers, they had long hooked sticks, and while they were stretching out together, their two sticks caught in each other in the tree, and they could not extricate them. While they were considering what they should do, the three sons of Mahā Vishṇu came by, and on being appealed to by the goddess, they good-naturedly took hold of the ends of the two sticks, and with "a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether," broke the crook of the husband's stick, and so liberated them both. The goddess was so pleased with the performance that she suggested a game after the model of what she had just seen. So the game of *an-keliya* was inaugurated, and whenever it is necessary to appease the goddess, the game of which she is said to be so fond, is performed to propitiate her and to rid the country of the particular scourge, which she is considered in her anger to have brought upon it.†

The game is played as follows:—A flat piece of ground (*an-pitiya*) having been selected,—the esplanade in Kandy is said to have been once a favourite place,—the trunk of a large tree (*an-gaha*) is planted in the centre, (unless there is a large enough tree growing there already) and strong coils of jungle creepers called *perehe* are loosely wound round its base. About four or five yards in front of this tree an oblong hole is dug, 6 or 7 feet long, by 3 or 3½ feet broad, and from 4 to 5 feet deep. The exact distance from the tree depends on the description of horns to be used in the game. The sides of this hole are lined with cocoanut

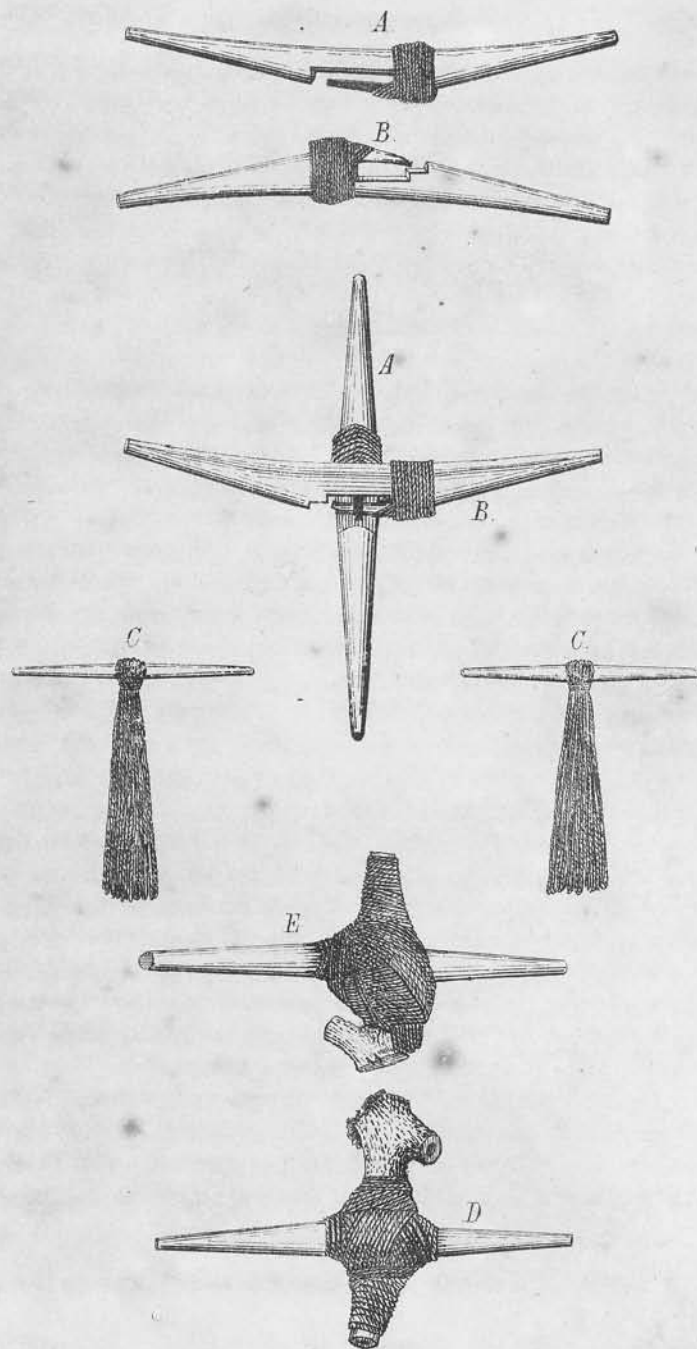
\* *Michelia champakā*.

† Note (2).

stumps, and inside it is erected upside down a log of a cocoanut tree, about 24 feet long, with the roots shaved so as to have a heavy top. The post is called the *henakanda* or the *waligaha*. The hole at its base is large enough to allow of the post having a considerable amount of "play" backwards and forwards, and the heavy top is to add to the leverage and the strain, as will be described hereafter, on the horns. As in the case of the *an-gaha*, strong bands of creepers are coiled loosely round the base, a short distance above the level of the ground, and two long and strong ropes or jungle creepers are tied to the top; these ropes are called *walimel*, and are intended to be held by the persons taking part in the game, about fifteen yards off. On opposite sides of the *an-gaha* two sheds are put up to keep the horns, with a platform erected in each.

In some places deer horns are used. The brow antler is shortened to about two inches, and the branch to about six, and at the end of the latter a strong piece of wood is tied crosswise. Two of these of equal size are a pair, and are fitted against each other in the game. Horns such as these are, however, only used when the game is played on a small scale, and more for amusement than as a religious ceremony, or where the root horns are not procurable. There is not so much detail in this description of the game, and certainly nothing like the enthusiasm in it that *an-keliya* proper calls forth. In *an-keliya* proper many kinds of roots are in use, the most important being those of the *andara*,\* *petan*,† and *ettériya*‡ trees. The greatest care is taken in selecting and preparing these, for the slightest flaw or split in the horn would seal its fate in the game. The *Yatipila*, or "under-side," horns must be curved, though not to such a sharp angle as a deer horn, while the *Udupila*, or "upper-side," horns are nearly straight. When required for use they are tied to the centre of long and stout pieces of wood prepared for the purpose, the length and girth of which depend on the size of the horns, though a

\* *Dichrostachys cinerea*. † *Bauhinia tomentosa*. ‡ *Murraya exotica*.



horn six inches in girth would require a support of seven or eight feet long, and about one and a-half feet round. These supports are called *aṇ-môla*, and the process of trying on the horn is always performed by an expert, and is one which requires the greatest care. The thicker end of the horn is tied to the *aṇ-môla* with ropes made out of the *belipattā\** tree, and the ropes must be arranged so as not to let the horn slip during the tug, for no re-arrangement is afterwards allowed. The position, too, in which the horns are tied to the *aṇ-môl* is of paramount importance, for, as the whole strain is to fall on the horn, the position and manner in which it is attached to its support must necessarily add to or decrease its power of bearing the strain. The *aṇ-môl* are cut away a little so as to allow the opposing horn and *aṇ-môla* to fit closely to each other in the contest. †

The only other requisites are two coils of rope containing a specified number of coils, with a stick attached in such a way as to admit of its twisting the coils tightly when necessary. These are called the *vāram* and their size and strength depend on those of the horns.

When all is ready the *aṇ-môl* and the *vāram* are carried in a procession to the *aṇ-piṭiya*, the captain (*vattāḍiyā*) of each side bearing the *aṇ-môl*. At the *aṇ-piṭiya* they are put on the platform in the sheds (*aṇ-madu*) prepared for them where they are sprinkled with scented water, and some rosin is burnt under them. They are then taken to the *aṇ-gaha*, and the horns are carefully measured against each other. They must be as nearly as possible of the same size, or the game will be postponed until two of equal size are produced. The Kapurāla, or minister of Pattini, is then called in, and he invokes the aid of the goddess. During the invocation the captains take the horns round the *aṇ-gaha* followed by the Kapurāla,

\* *Hibiscus tiliaceus*.

† See Plate: A B are *Uḍupila* and *Yaṭipila* wooden "horns"; c c, *madu*, attached to sticks (*riṭi*); D E, elk "horns."



and the tom-tom beaters. When it is over, the *Udupila* horn is taken back to the shed, and the coil of ropes belonging to the *Yatipila* horn is arranged by an expert over and under the *Yatipila* horn, in such a manner as is best calculated to support it, the loose ends of the coil being held in the meantime by the *Yatipila* adherents, who sit round in a ring and pull, press in, or twist the coils as directed by the expert. The coils belonging to the *Yatipila* having been arranged, the *Udupila* expert steps forward and arranges his coil over the ropes already laid in the manner he thinks will assist his horn, and increase the strain on the other, the loose ends of the coil being held and manipulated as before by the *Udupila* men. When he has finished, the *Udupila* horn is brought up and artfully adjusted through the coils of the ropes on to the other, and directly this is done, the two sides stand up, the ropes are pulled and twisted tightly into their places, and the ends of the coils are pulled by each party in different directions, with the object, if possible, of breaking one of the horns. If in about half an hour of this tugging neither of the horns has given way, the coils round the *Yatipila* are tied round those of the creepers at the base of the *an-gaha*, and similarly the *Udupila warama* to those round the *henakanda*. Both parties then lay hold indiscriminately of the ropes tied to the top of the *henakanda*, and singing a refrain in praise of their own particular horn the while, pull with long jerks or swings, until one of the horns break off or is cracked. While the tug continues, the *an-mól* are carefully held in their places by one or more (according to their size) of each party.\* The leverage afforded by the length of the post, its heavy top, and the "play" it has at the base, puts an enormous strain on the horns, and as a rule they break soon enough, but occasionally they last for days, and are sometimes not broken after all.

A few words on the meaning of the words *Udupila* and *Yatipila*, and what the names imply. The *Yatipila* is the

\* When the *an-mól* are very large, sometimes as many as ten or twelve persons are required to hold each.

horn whose point is fixed vertically, so as to curve upwards from below and from under the *Udupila*, which is placed horizontally over and across the middle of the curve of the *Yatipila*, and at right angles to it. The two parties represented by the horns belong to either side by descent, and not by selection or choice, it being considered that every Sinhalese family belongs from ancient time to one or the other side. It sometimes happens that members of the same family belong to different sides, but this is very rare, and indeed, to prevent its possibility, it is said that inter-marriages between families of different sides were forbidden in times past. It is rarer still to find any person who has voluntarily abandoned one side for the other, and when this is done, it is owing to very bitter family quarrels. Thus every Sinhalese who attends at an *an-keliya*, has a close interest in the game, and knows his place in the field.

To return, directly a horn cracks or is broken, it is extricated from its ropes and its *an-móla*, and a rush is made for the broken pieces (*tódu*) ; the *an-móla* is left against the *an-gaha*, and the captain of the losing side having satisfied himself that the winning horn is intact, admits that he has lost. As soon as the admission is made, a rope is tied between the *an-gaha* and the *henakanda*, and the losing party are made to stand on one side of it, while the winners, one or two of whom carry the pieces of the broken horn, dance round them, hoot at them, revile them, and make themselves as disagreeable as they can without actually assaulting them. In some places indecent expressions and contemptuous reference to absent persons are forbidden ; but, as a rule, there is little or no restraint on the language that may be, and is, used.

The losers are bound to submit in silence ; but occasionally some one of them is stung beyond endurance by the taunts of his opponents, and retorts, and then there is a general fight. Should one of the winners in the whirl of the dance, or carried away by his feelings, touch one of the losing side, if he is not at once handed over to be soundly thrashed by them, a quarrel ensues, and a free-fight is the result. These quarrels, though they seldom happen, have

frequently very serious results, but, strange to say, legal proceedings are very rarely if ever instituted for the actual assault. It seems to be considered an offence *contra bonos mores*, or an insult to the goddess, to bring a case for anything that has occurred during *añ-keliya*, so that, whatever accidents may happen there, the courts hear nothing of them.

When the winners are tired of dancing round and insulting their opponents, the latter are set at liberty, and the winning horn is taken in procession to a *Déwálé*, or some other place specially prepared for its reception, where it remains until the following day, and is then brought back to the *añ-pitiya*. The losers of the day before come prepared with another horn, which may be as much as one-fourth larger than its adversary, and the game is proceeded with as before, the previous losers being, however, as a preliminary, subjected to a repetition of yesterday's insults. If the old horn breaks, its adherents are repaid their unpleasantness of the day before, with interest; but, if it is again victorious, the losers are insulted as before; so the game proceeds until it is found impossible to break a horn within a certain pre-arranged time, or until the *Udupila* wins twice, or the *Yatipila* three times successively, when the game is brought to a close.\*

The horns that have been victorious on several occasions are prized very highly by their possessors, and the names given to them are often very curious. I annex a few:—

*Pandakunā* = "the rotten tailed:" the larger end of this horn is particularly rotten. *Benarāja* = "the hollow king:" the horn has a hollow in its thicker end. *Kal-issa* = "the prawn:" this horn once slipped out of its *añ-mōla* during the tug. *Ginipelikoṭa* = "the short fire-brand:" it was accidentally found with some partly burnt firewood. *Gorokgaspāluwa* = "the destroyer of the *goraka* trees:" this horn was once used, and was victorious when the *añ-gaha* was a *goraka* tree, and came down during the struggle.

\* It is believed that Pattini is better pleased when the *Udupila* horn (which represents her husband's stick in the *sapu* tree) is broken.

## NOTES.\*

## (1)

Previous notices of the Sinhalese *añ-keliya* are here brought together to further illustrate this semi-religious game:—

## (a)

*A Play or a Sacrifice.*—There is another sport, which generally all people used with much delight, being, as they called it, a sacrifice to one of their gods, to wit, Potting Dio [*Pattini Deviyó*.] And the benefit of it is, that it frees the country from grief and diseases. For the beastliness of the exercise they never celebrated it near any town, nor in sight of women, but in a remote place. The manner of the game is thus. They have two crooked sticks like elbows, one hooked into the other, and so with contrivances they pull with ropes, until the one break the other; some siding with one stick and some with the other; but never is money laid on either side. Upon the breaking of the stick, that party that hath won doth not a little rejoyce. Which rejoycing is exprest by dancing and singing, and uttering such sordid beastly expressions, together with postures of their bodies, as I omit to write them, as being their shame in acting, and would be mine in rehearsing. For he is at that time most renowned that behaves himself most shamelessly and beast-like.

This filthy solemnity was formerly much in use among them; and even the King himself hath spent time in it, but now lately he hath absolutely forbidden it under penalty of a forfeiture of money. So that now the practice hereof is quite left off.

But though it is thus gone into disuse, yet, out of the great delight the people had in it, they of Gompala [*Gampola*] would revive it again; and did. Which coming to the King's ear, he sent one of his noblemen to take a fine from them for it. The nobleman knew the people would not come to pay a fine, and therefore was fain to go to work by a stratagem. Pitching, therefore, his tents by a pond, he gave orders to call all the people to his assistance to catch fish for the King's use. Which they were very ready to do, hoping to have the refuse fish for themselves. And when they were all thus assembled together with their tools and necessary instruments for that purpose, the nobleman charged them all in the King's name, according to the countries fashion, which was by pulling off his cap, and falling down upon the ground three times, that not a man of them should budge till they had paid such a sum of money, which was so much a piece, for reviving that play that the King had forbid. Which they were forced to do before they departed from the pond side. And the money was carried into the King's exchequer.—Knox, *Ceylon*, 1681, pp. 98, 99.

\* Added with Mr. Le Mesurier's approval.—B., *Hon. Sec.*

(b)

*Ceremony of "Pulling of Horns"* (March 1, 1830).—The ceremony of "Pulling Horns" is now taking place in this village, and I went this evening to see it. In passing through the village I was surprised to see so very few people in their houses, but when I got near the place I found they were all there. A place in the jungle is cleared, in the middle of which a deep hollow is dug. In this hole is put a cocoa-nut tree, about ten or twelve feet high, which has been rooted up for the purpose, with its root upwards. The people of the village divide themselves into two parties, called the "Upper Party" (*uḍa pila*) and the "Lower Party" (*yafi pila*), and each party has a large branch of a tree with the bark peeled off, notched in the middle, and another piece of wood very strong fastened tight across it, so as to resemble a hook. In some places the horns of the elk are used. When they have linked the two together they are fastened to the cocoa-nut tree by very strong topes or creeping plants (*wel*), and each party pulls with all their strength, at the same time making a tremendous noise, till one of the horns break. The broken horn is put into a little cadjan bungalow built on one side, and the other is carried in procession on a man's shoulder, wrapped in white cloth, together with the ropes with which it was fastened, round the cocoa-nut tree about a dozen times, under a canopy supported by four men. They then stop at a tree, in the middle of which is placed a cocoa-nut shell used as a lamp, and putting the victorious, that is, the unbroken horn, in it, they repeat some verses in Singhalese, the object of which is to invoke the goddess Pattini to take away the "great sickness" (the small-pox) which is now prevalent among them. Having concluded the verse, they worship the "horn," with their hands clasped and raised to their foreheads, in the same manner as they worship Buddha at the temples. They continue afterwards to go round the cocoa-nut tree as before, dancing and singing and blowing the conques, and beating the tom-toms; and then the conquered party sit down in the ground, and being separated from the other by a rope, they suffer themselves to have all the abuse which the Singhalese language supplies heaped upon them. This, however, though spoken with apparent earnestness, consists merely in words which are repeated, or rather sung, by the head of the party, the rest joining in it by way of chorus.—SELKIRK, *Recollections of Ceylon*, 1844, pp. 398-9.

(c)

*Ceremony to drive away Small-pox* (May 2, 1838).—A few nights ago I went to the *an-pitiya*, or place where the ceremony of "pulling the horns" takes place. (See March 1, 1830, *supra*.) In the midst of a large open space of ground a high pole is erected, generally an areka-nut tree, with the bunch of leaves at the top cut off. From the top of this pole, ropes, made of parts of the cocoa-nut leaf, are extended to the four corners of an enclosed place. A burning lamp is fixed on the top, and there are

several other lamps in other places. A large hole is dug in the ground, in which is placed the lower part of a dug-up cocoa-nut tree, about ten feet long, with the roots upwards. Between this and a large tree about twelve yards distant, are fastened two large horns, and the thick and tough jungle-creepers, with which they are bound together, are fastened to the tree on one side, and to the stump of the cocoa-tree on the other. On each side are from sixty to one hundred men, trying with all their might to break the horn. If the horn of either party breaks, that party is conquered, and submits patiently to a great deal of abuse from the other party. The conquering party, after the performance of some ceremony at the tree, carry their horn to a small *maḍuwa* prepared for it at another part of the village, in great triumph, and at the end of a certain number of days the Kapuwás, or devil-priests, are called, and a grand ceremony takes place. The people firmly believe that "pulling horns" is the only way to get rid of the small-pox, which they call the "great disease." And they say, too, that when this disease is prevalent in the country, the gods in the other world are in the habit of pulling horns at night to stop it. In proof of this a man told me a few days ago that his father was once travelling at night, and on his way he heard at a short distance a noise such as is made at the pulling of horns.\* And when he came to the place he found nobody, and he was sure the noise could only proceed from the gods. The poor man, however, was so frightened, that he went home and died soon after.

The great ceremony usual when the "pulling of horns" is ended took place to-night. In a distant part of the village of Cotta, the people had erected three *maḍu*, one of which was very large. It was filled with women and children. In one of the two smaller ones was the devil-priest, and in the other were many things that he makes use of in his ceremonies. There were two tom-tom-beaters and large crowds of people. The Kapuwá was dressed very fantastically, and had six or eight little bells on each leg. He first danced with a lighted torch in each hand, then with a bunch of areka-flowers, then with a pitcher of water, and at last with a broken chatty, in which was burning charcoal. He put himself into all sorts of attitudes, with each of these in his hands, and neither burnt his long beard, which he seemed in great danger of doing, from carrying, as he did, the two lighted torches, the one on one shoulder and the other on the other, nor spilled the water, nor shed the hot embers. All the time he was dancing he continued to throw handfuls of powdered *dummala*, or resin, into the torches, which went off in a sudden blaze like gunpowder. All this was done at the beat of tom-tom, accompanied with singing, by the men beating them. I remained to witness it till twelve o'clock, and the dancing was still going on and

\* The noise made on this occasion is very great, and may be heard to a great distance. It always reminded me of I. Kings, xviii., 27.



would continue till sunrise. At 8 p.m., at 12, and at 4 a.m., plates of rice and seven different sorts of curry are placed in small covered maduwas, made for the purpose, as offerings to the devil.—*Id.*, pp. 505-8.

(d)

Among the religious games the first in the *aṇ-ēdima*, or "Pulling of Horns," the idea of the merry-thought of European superstition developed on a gigantic scale. It is not a game in celebration of a victory, nor in commemoration of any great national event, like the games of classic Greece and Rome, but rather in propitiation of some offended deity; and whether sickness has visited the people, murrain attacked the cattle, insects and grubs settled on the young rice fields, or a protracted drought threatened calamity to man and beast, the alarmed Singhalese peasant know of no more efficacious remedy than an appeal to Vishṇu or Śiva, Pattini-deviyó, Katarágam-deviyó, or Basnairá-deviyó, through the medium of an *aṇ-ēdima*. The village elders, as soon as they awake to a sense of the impending danger, wait in solemn deputation on the Kapurála, or priest of the district *kōwila*, or temple, carrying presents with them for the seer, (very much after the manner of Saul when he waited on Samuel to learn the name of the particular deity that ought to be appeased,) and generally to concert measures for the due and proper celebration of the games. The Kapurála promises to obtain the desired information, but as this must be done at a lucky hour, on an auspicious day, and after sundry ablutions and purifications, he dismisses his visitors with a promise to communicate with them on a subsequent day. He next proceeds to consult the oracle, and fixes a day for the celebration of the game, taking care, however, that it should be sufficiently removed to allow of the real crisis of the danger to be passed. The day fixed upon is communicated to the elders, who invite the villagers interested, by distribution of betel leaves; and preparations for the celebration commence in earnest. The villagers next divide into two parties or teams, the upper and the lower. This distinction is merely topographical, the villages lying towards the head of a valley or stream being the upper and those further down being the lower.\* Each party next chooses its captain or champion, who brings with him the stout branch of an elk horn with the frontlet stang on. This horn is held in proportionate veneration according to the number of victories it may have achieved, and there are some handed down from father to son—for the championship is hereditary—that have come

"O'er a' the ills o' life victorious"

for a hundred years. The place appropriated for the game is called the *aṇ-piṭiya*, an open place in some central situation, and generally under

\* Not so; the *Uḍupila* and *Yaṭipila* are hereditary distinctions.—B., *Hon. Sec.*

the shade of an over-spreading *bó* tree, thus making the tree sacred to Buddha participate in a purely Hindú ceremony. At one end of the *aṇ-piṭiya*

"Stands there a stump six feet high, the ruins of a tree,  
"Yet unrotted by rain and tempests' force."

The stump selected is generally that of a cocoanut tree put loosely into a deep hole, with the root-end up, and is called the *henakanda*, or "thunderbolt." A hole large enough for a man's arm to pass is cut or burnt through this upper end. The respective teams are now ready with stout ropes made of buffalo-hide and strong jungle creepers, when the Kapurála opens the game, proclaiming, like Pelides at the funeral pyre of Patroclus,

"Come ye that list this prize to win, and ye this bout decide."

The men of the upper team now pass a stout buffalo-hide rope through the hole in the *henakanda* and firmly make fast to its end the elk horn of their champion. The horn of the lower team is similarly got ready and tied to the nearest tree; the *henakanda* is now leaned forward, and the two champions hook the horns one into the other, and lash them together with cords. The two champions grasp the horns in their hands to prevent their turning or slipping, and the word is given to pull. Both teams now unite and haul at the rope passed through *henakanda*, while some half a dozen men of both parties lay hold of the *henakanda* and sway it up and down, as the rope in the hands of the pullers is tightened or relaxed. The two champions hold on to the horns like grim death, and are swayed hither and thither with every motion of the rope. The contest lasts for hours, the snapping of a rope only serving to prolong it with a fresh splice, until one of the horns yields, and the pullers go rolling and sprawling on the ground.\*

All the time the mighty tug has been going on, the Kapurála is engaged at a small booth constructed of white olas under the *bó* tree, chanting the sacred hymns appropriate to the occasion, jingling the *halamba*, or consecrated armlets, and burning incense to the accompaniment of tom-tom, fife, and cymbal. After the contest has been decided the whole assembly go in procession through the villages that participated in the ceremony, the Kapurála leading with a chant, the champion carrying the victorious horn in a basket on his hand, and every one joining in the "*hōyiyá*" chorus at the proper stops. By the time the procession returns to the ground, a feast, consisting of rice boiled in

\* In this, as well as in the striking of cocoa-nuts (*poropol gehima*), it is considered a bad omen should the horn or cocoa-nut of the upper team break. such an accident is looked upon as the consequence of the continual displeasure of the offended deity. Hence it is not unusual to concede the victory to the upper team by opposing a weaker horn.

cocoa-nut milk, vegetable curries (for flesh of any kind is forbidden), tire, and honey is laid out on green plantain leaves. The feasting over, they all rise at a sign from the Kapurála, and give one united shout "*hóyiyá*," and then disperse. The Kapurála receives the customary presents, and the victorious elk horn is again laid up in "lavender," if a liberal sprinkling of oil of resin may be so called, until some other threatened danger brings it out.—L. LUDOVICI, *C. A. S. Journ.*, 1873, pp. 20-24.

## (e)

"*Aṇ-keliya*," or "*Pulling of Horns*." March 3, 1883.—Witnessed this superstitious game of the Sinhalese to-day, at Kaḷubóvīla in the Salpiṭi Kóralé, Western Province. Small-pox had been prevailing in the villages round for some time, and the wiseacres, as usual in case of such epidemics, had decided to worst the particular demon or demons responsible, by invoking the aid of *Pattini-deviyó*, the patroness of the sport, with *aṇ-keli-pájáva*.

[It is customary with the Sinhalese, when any malignant type of disease attacks man or beast, to meet and consider what form of ceremony, *aṇ-keliya*, *porapol gehima*, &c., the remedy had best take. The aid of the Kapurála, or lay priest of a Déválé, is called in to name time and place. Should *aṇ-keliya* be decided upon, the villagers, attended by a Kapurála (sometimes by two, one for each side), proceed to the spot selected (*aṇ-piṭiya*; *aṇ-piṭṭaniya*) at the hour fixed, after the necessary purification of themselves. The ground has already been sanctified by the erection of a post adorned with cocoanut flowers (*kap hiṭavanavá*) and two horns selected by the Kapurála, and handed over to the *aṇ-waṭ-ṭádiyá*, or captain, of either side. A shed is put up, ornamented with various flowers and tender cocoanut leaves, which the Kapurála hallows by prayer accompanied by the sprinkling of saffron-water, the waving of incense, and jangling of the sacred *deyiran*, or bangles. Meanwhile, the foot of a tree (*aṇ-gaha*) is cleared, and a narrow pit dug to receive the cocoanut stump (*henakanda*; *waligaha*), and lined with planks. Through the upper part of this cocoanut stump (which is inserted in the pit with the shaved root upwards) a hole is bored and a stout rope passed: strong nooses of *kirindī*\* or *kaḷu* creeper of a single link or more are also made round the lower part of the *aṇ-gaha* and the *henakanda*.]

The game had been running on for a week or two, and fortune had steadily inclined to the *Yaṭipila* (lit. "Under-party") side, the special *protégés* of the goddess *Pattini*, as the *Uḍupila* (lit. "Upper-party") are of her husband, *Pálanga*. The *aṇ-piṭiya*, or arena selected, was in the jungle, but not far from habitations. On arrival (4 P.M.) found the

*Yaṭipila* party busily preparing for the struggle by cutting the *kón\** socket (into which the horn itself was let), so as to allow the two horns to meet closely. Here the "horns" consist of two pieces of hard, well-seasoned wood, *taranaṭ* and *andaraṭ* respectively,—six to eight inches in length and one and a half or two inches thick,—tapering slightly towards their points. These had been fitted into the sockets, and bound down fast with the tough bark of a shrub (*beli paṭṭá*§), to add to their strength.

Meanwhile the Kapurála was performing an initiatory service in the shed (*maḍuwa*) common to both parties. At the side of the tree (*aṇ-gaha*) and cocoanut stump (*henakanda*) to which the horns were to be attached prior to the actual "pulling," stood the *mal-pēla*, or small cadjan-roofed shed for flowers and other offerings of either party. In these were kept, till wanted, the horns and bark strands (*madu*) used for tying up the horns when finally adjusted across each other. Festoons of young cocoanut leaves connected the three sheds together, being carried across high poles, at the top of which rag torches were fixed—a proof that all were prepared to carry on the stern, if bloodless, fray "till utter darkness closed her wing." From time to time the Kapurála might be heard muttering some incantations in the *maḍuwa*, where he was assisted by a *Uḍupila* and *Yaṭipila* boy. On a shelf in the *maḍuwa* were ranged chatties, in which the money offerings (*paṇḍuru*) of both sides were placed, a chank, and an old horn (hero of many a gallant fight) carefully wrapped in white cloth and decked with flowers: *paṇḍuru* were noticed, too, hung to the roof of each *mal-pēla* inside.

When the *Yaṭipila* horn socket had been shaped so as to satisfy the very scrupulous ideas of both sides, the *Yaṭipila* party brought their *madu* (five skeins of *beli paṭṭá*) and placed them to the best advantage round their horn,—a most important part of the business, and closely watched by the *Uḍupila* faction, it being quite possible so to arrange the strings as to put the "enemy" at a serious disadvantage in the ensuing "tug of war." Much time was wasted, *more Indico*, in the adjusting of the *madu*, strong language being freely bandied with friends and foes alike. When the *Yaṭipila* party had at length finished placing their *madu* to their own satisfaction, it seemed as if the *Uḍupila* men would decline the contest on the score of some fancied unfair arrangement of the strings. Undoubtedly, they had been laid with great skill, skein by skein,—nay, strand by strand,—and beaten down by careful hands, so as to leave no weak point for the opponents to profit by. Ultimately the *Uḍupila* party consented to take their chance and try

\* *Schleichera trijuga*, or Ceylon oak, Willd.

† *Debera corymbosa*, Willd.

‡ *Dichrostachys cinerea*.

§ *Hibiscus tiliaceus*.

\* *Rourea santaloides*, W. and A.



conclusions. Their *madu* were then brought and similarly arranged over those of the *Yaṭipila*. Next the *Uḍupila* horn itself was carried in semi-procession from their own *mal-pēla*—the more zealous of the party adoring it *en route*—and inserted through the *madu* across the *Yaṭipila* horn at right-angles.

*Yaṭipila* having won at the last two "pulls" the *Uḍupila* side was allowed on this occasion an *andara* horn as against one of *tarana*, a supposed weaker wood. Throughout the whole process of arranging the *madu* and the horns, only eighteen men were permitted to take part—eight of *Uḍupila*, ten of *Yaṭipila*.

Immediately the horns were fairly hooked together a mighty struggle ensued between the eighteen champions in their endeavour to twist their own *madu* more quickly and tightly than their opponents. Here and there the seething mass of men was borne writhing and swaying.

"They tug, they strain! down, down, they go!"

till the sweat poured down apace, and utterly exhausted, both parties mutually agreed to say "Hold, enough"—but not until many a flesh-wound had been gained in the senseless "scrimmage."

As neither horn had snapped in this preliminary trial of strength, they were brought to the *Yaṭipila* tree (*aṇ-gaha*), and the *Yaṭipila madu* bound to the creeper noose (*pēssa*) which encircled the trunk near the bottom. The *henakanda*, or *Uḍupila* stump, was then swung over in its narrow pit so as to approach the *Yaṭipila* tree as closely as possible; and when about two yards off to its *pēssa*, or double-link noose, was joined the *Uḍupila madu*. All being now ready for the real tug, the *henakanda* was slowly pushed over to the further end of the pit, thus effectually tightening up the nooses, *madu* and horns, between the *aṇ-gaha* and *waligaha*. Thereupon all present, irrespective of party, seized the rope attached to the other side of the *henakanda*, dragging it towards them by repeated jerks,\* leaving only the eighteen picked men to steady the horns, one of the *Uḍupila* champions standing on the *Yaṭipila* socket and keeping the *Uḍupila* socket perpendicular. Sometimes days elapse before either horn snaps—occasionally they cannot be broken at all. In this instance the ominous click was heard within ten minutes of the "pulling." The horns were at once unloosed, and the *andara*, or *Uḍupila* horn, found to be broken. A scene followed baffling description. The victorious *Yaṭipila* party rushed madly about, shouting for joy, and shaking the broken pieces of the horn in the faces of their humbled opponents—looking in the growing darkness like veritable demons, as they dashed wildly from place to place. The triumphant horn itself was carried by a few of its admirers thrice round the *maḍuwa*, where the *Kapurāla* recited further incantations.

\* The noise of the *henakanda* striking the end of the pit in each pull or jerk is called *waliwettenavā*, and may be heard at a great distance.

After a short interval a rope was stretched from the *aṇ-gaha*, and the *Uḍupila* party all made to stand on one side of it, whilst their *Yaṭipila* conquerors condemned them by raising an abusive refrain couched in terms of which the less said the better. It commenced thus, one man at a time giving vent to his impromptu sarcasm and abuse, the rest striking in after each line with "*hōyiyō*":—

Hondada, putē,  
Hōyiyō!  
Aṇ-keliyā,  
Hōyiyō!

"Good, my boy, was'nt it,  
Ha! ha!  
Your pulling the horns,  
Ha! ha!"

[The evident relish with which the foulest expressions, coined *extempore* by the *Yaṭipila* "*coryphæus*," would appear to be appreciated by his fellows, leaves on the mind no enhanced respect for the Singhalese villager in his lighter mood. To the credit of the vanquished be it said, they usually submit to the incessant volley of "Billingsgate" with perfect, if sullen, silence, worthy of a better cause.]\*

As I quitted the wierd scene now lit by the dim torches, the "fun" (save the mark!) began to wax fast and furious, and would probably be carried on for hours.

[From the day of commencing the ceremonies attending *aṇ-keliya*, the villagers should cleanse themselves, and their houses, and refrain from eating prohibited flesh, in order to keep free of all uncleanness (*kili*). After the lapse of some days, and when one or two horns have been broken, arrangements are made for the *pēli*, or procession round the villages. The *Kapurāla* and *Kaṭṭāḍiyā* inform the people of the days fixed for the procession, who, as a rule, then send necessary requirements, as provisions, cloth, money, &c., to the *aṇ-pitiya*, for their use. On the procession day the inmates of each house bathe, anoint their heads, and get together money (to be offered to the sacred *deyiran* box), earthen pots adorned with cocoanut flowers, and saffron-water for sprinkling. Those accompanying the procession provide themselves with tambourins, tom-toms, trumpets, and all kinds of Singhalese music.

\* A story is told of a *Mudaliyār* and his servant, passing together near an *aṇ-pitiyak*, the latter holding a talipot leaf umbrella over his master's head. Suddenly the cry "*hōyiyō*" arose from the victorious side, to which the servant belonged, the *Mudaliyār* being of the vanquished party. Thereupon the servant began to dance for joy behind the *Mudaliyār*, ever and anon shouting "*hōyiyō*," and tapping the great man's head with the talipot leaf. The *Mudaliyār*, naturally surprised and angry, turned upon him with "How now, fellow!" ("*Mokada, bola!*"), to which the servant replied, "See, sir, we have won!" ("*Anē, Hāmu-durwanē, api dinuvā.*") Without another word the *Mudaliyār* passed on, shamed.

Some of these players and dancers precede, whilst others follow, the victorious "horn," which, wrapped in white cloth, incensed and sprinkled with saffron-water, is carried on the head of the Katṭāḍiyā, dressed in spotless white, under a white canopy, attended by the Kapurālas with *deyiran* on their heads. The people, as they march with lighted torches and censers, give vent to loud "hurrahs," at the same time extolling the virtues of the goddess Pattini, and of Iṣwara, Viṣṇu, and Kandakumāra. Every house of the victorious side is visited, and on its inmates blessings invoked with the *deyiran*: in return, these offer refreshments of milk, rice, jaggery, coffee, &c. All the houses and gardens should be well cleaned, and the former whitewashed for the reception of the Kapurāla and the others conducting the procession; otherwise they will not be entered, and thus lose the benefit of the general exorcism. This procession is continued for seven days, at the end of which a grand feast is given to the people at the *aṇ-piṭṭaniya*\*.—H. C. P. BELL.

## (2)

The mythical history of *Pattini Deviyō*, whose aid the Sinhalese so readily invoke to rid them not only of *maha leḍa*, "the great sickness," or small-pox, but of every form of epidemic

\* Compare the Tamil *velvé* at Trincomalie (as described in the "North Christian Herald," for March, 1879), which forms the concluding part of the *grāmasānti* ("village propitiation") ceremony "to perfect what was lacking in the former." It is so arranged that the services of the temple (Kónāsar) or their benefits became available for every house and part of the town. *Kumbam* were carried round from every temporary shrine along all the streets, accompanied by every sort of native music, and decorated in truly oriental style. An *ālavattam* made of leaves and clothes, a flag, an umbrella, and the large sacrificial knife by which the goats had been killed, were carried round and exhibited at every house. The owners of the houses were expected to decorate their gates with leaves and plantain trees, and place outside a *nirai-kuḍam*, or a pot of water on a white cloth, decorated with palm and mango leaves, on a table under which was placed a betel stand containing betel leaves, arecanuts, and grain, burning lamp, and smoking incense. The *kumbam* were carried on the heads of men who professed to be under diabolical influence, and who, smeared with sacred dung, danced through the streets to the sound of tom-toms, uttering cries and groans which were taken to be the voices of evil spirits. At every house before which they stopped water was poured over them and a young cocoanut was given them to drink, so that it is not surprising to hear that next day two of them were struck down by heat apoplexy.

disease, is contained in a collection of thirty-five "books," styled *Pan-tis-kólmurē*, only to be found complete in the hands of a few of her lay priests. Among the episodes of the goddess' life on earth is related the occurrence which originated the national game *aṇ-keḷiya*. It may be read, *inter alia*, in a small Sinhalese pamphlet, under the title *Aṇkeḷi-upata*, or *Pattini-mālāva*. This poem contains seventy-seven four-line stanzas, and some additional verses, written in simple colloquial style.

## AṆ-KEḶI-UPATA.

Stanzas 1, 2, 3, 4, relate the goddess' birth in "the mango grove" of King Pāṇḍi, whose eyes she put out in the presence of Indra (*Sakra Deva*). Thence she proceeds to the city of Madurā to meet Prince Pālānga, and be married to him. Stanzas 5, 6, and 7: Prelude to description of *aṇ-keḷiya*.

8

කොළ රටෙන් බැස පාලන කුමරි	ඳ
මහාරජයේ පත්තිනි දෙවි	ඳ
වලල ඇත්ත ආවසි සිත් පුරු	ඳ
සරණ මගුල් කර පාවා දෙවි	ඳ

9

පාලන කුමරුන් පත්තිනි දෙවි	යෝ
උසනට වහිමින් කෙළකෙළ සිව්	යෝ
එකනට සපුමල් කුසුමක් ඇරී	යෝ
මෙවෙති උපකර පත්තිනි දෙවි	යෝ

10

මෙමල දකින්නට සිඹිසද කොසෙ	ද
මෙමල දකින්නට විලහස යෙමු	ද
එදා කොසින් විල් අසල කොවේ	ද
උදා එමල් විමසා අපි යෙමු	ද

8

From *Soli* country came Prince Pālānga;  
Māyā King's daughter the goddess Pattini  
Came, as her wont, to buy bangles;  
By the gods they were wedded,

9

As Prince Pālānga and goddess Pattini  
Were sporting in the orchard,  
A *sapu*\* flower to bud caused Pattini;  
A playful trick she planned.

\* *Michelia champaka*.

10

"How, love, am I to see this flower?  
Shall we go to the tank to find it?  
Went we not near the tank that day?  
Let us go to seek it in the morning."

After due offerings to the gods to ensure a successful quest (11, 12),

13

ගොසින් බැසපුටස් මානෙල් පිල	වා
ඔනන නොවෙයි සිමි නවසන් එපි	වා
ගොසින් බැසපුටස් නාමල් පිල	වා
ඔනන නොවෙයි සිමි නවසන් එපි	වා

Wending their way a tank of water lilies they reached,  
"This is not the spot, love! let us go on;"  
Next a grove of *nā* trees they entered.  
"This is not the spot, love! let us go on."

Thence to groves of *vetukeyiyā* \* and *dunukeyiyā* † fruitlessly (14), till at length, within a *champak* grove, Pálugga sees a flower reflected in a pond (15). Essayng to climb the tree (16), god Viṣva-karma aids by bringing a golden ladder (17). In vain Pálugga scans the boughs, north, east, west, and south for the flower (18, 19), but sees it at last out of reach on the topmost bough (20). They both lament their ill-luck, until Pálugga, with divine eyes, discovers a sandalwood hooked (sapling) (21). Again Viṣva-karma assists, providing a golden arekanut cutter with which to cut the hooks (22).

23

කෙකි දෙක ඇද ගසමුලට වඩි	න්	නේ
එරන් එ ඉණිමග ගතට නබ	න්	නේ
පාලග ඉස්සර ගතට වඩි	න්	නේ
පන්තිනි බිමසිට කෙකි උඩ දු	න්	නේ

24

දෙවනුව පන්තිනි ගතට වඩි	න්	නේ
පාලග උඩකද බලාවඩි	න්	නේ
පන්තිනි යටි කද බලා වඩි	න්	නේ
දෙන්නම කෙකි දෙක මලට පොව	න්	නේ

25

සැකුදෙව්දු මේ මව්න බල	න්	නේ
මලෙන් වැරදි කෙකි දෙක ඇවිලේ	න්	නේ
කෙකි ඇදලා අන්දෙක රතු වේ	න්	නේ
බැරිය කුසාලා බිමට බසි	න්	නේ

\* *Pandanus odoratissimus*, or screw pine.

† *P. humilis*.

26

නුවරට ගමනුන් පිටත්ව ය	න්	නේ
අඟනුන් දහසක් එක කඩ	න්	නේ
පිරිමින් දහසක් එක්කරග	න්	නේ
දෙවනුව දෙවියන් ගොසින් දකි	න්	නේ

27

අඟනුද පන්තිනි යටිපිල සිටි	න්	නේ
පිරිමිද පාලග උඩපිල සිටි	න්	නේ
දෙපිලට සිට කෙකි දෙකද අදි	න්	නේ
පාලග කුමරුගෙ කෙක්ක බිදේ	න්	නේ

28

හිගොසි කියා යටිපිල සමුදු	වා
කියා නටති අන්කෙළි වාර	වා
කියති ඉනින් කුල්වාරන් බෝ	වා
ඉදිති බලා සින ලැජ්ජා බෝ	වා

23

To the foot of the tree the hooks they took,  
And deftly placed the golden ladder;  
Pálugga is first to mount the tree,  
To him Pattini hands the hooks.

24

Then goddess Pattini climbed the tree,  
To a higher bough ascended Pálugga,  
On a lower bough remained Pattini;  
With their hooks both touched the flower.

25

God Śakra beheld this wondrous act;  
Missing the flower the two hooks caught;  
Pulling at the hooks their hands grew red;  
Unable to part them, both descended.

26

Then to the city they returned;  
(To pull the hooks) a thousand maids  
And a thousand men were summoned;  
Again Pálugga and Pattini went to see the gods.

27

All the maids with Pattini were on the lower side (*Yatipila*),  
All the men with Pálugga were on the upper side (*Udupila*);  
Ranging (themselves) they pulled the two hooks;  
Prince Pálugga's hook it was that broke.



The *Yatipila* assemblage, crying "*hiyoyi*,"  
Danced, reciting horn-pulling songs  
As they sang their scornful ditties;  
(The *Udupila* party) stood silent in their shame.

Enraged at his defeat *Pālayga* cries "Cut down and bring me hither  
hooks from all places where hooks may be had" (29). Collecting 7,000  
oxen and loading them with seven *amunam* of arekanuts, he sent men to  
bring *andara*\* wood (30). Traversing the hill-country (*Uḍaraṭa*), they  
rested in *Hévāheṭa* and *Hanguranketa*; thence through *Maturāṭa* to "the  
city," and on through *Tunkinda* to *Kaḍawata*; passing *Wellawāya* and  
*Kurugama* by winding paths they crossed the ferry at *Yadalangamuva*,  
and spread their gunny bags (of arekanuts) in *Usaṅgoḍa* (32). Skirting  
"the two ponds" they went through "the city" to *Kataragama* (temple);  
there they made offerings and started afresh the next morning (33).  
Arriving at *Katagamuva* in *Māvathakāḍa*, and passing over "the tank built  
of gods," they beheld the villages *Mirāvilā* and *Sitrāvilā*, where they  
rested after crossing the *Kirindi-gaṅga* (34). Proceeding, they traversed  
"the great salt pans of *Koholankāḍa*, crossed the *Walawé-gaṅga* to  
*Māgama*; thence through *Doḷos-giruva* and *Mātoṭa* (*Mātara*) to  
*Devundara* (*Dondra*), where they opened their bags afresh (35).

Learning that they had come from *Māyā-ṛaṭa* in search of *andara*  
wood, the natives provided a thousand *andara* sticks in exchange for the  
seven *amunam* of dried arekanuts (36, 37). Stanzas 38 and 39 describe  
the return route, through *Mātoṭa*, across the *Walawé-gaṅga* to *Māgama*,  
and past *Buttala* and *Palatupāna* to *Andun-oruva* and *Keḷilittā*;  
thence on through *Karudāva*, *Mārāva*, *Mūḍavapūn*, and *Bāhāré*, till they  
struck *Dambagalla* and the *Koṭabōva* road, where they rested awhile.  
At length they reach *Wellassa*, and emptied out the thousand *andara*  
sticks on the ground.

41

විස්ම කරුම අං කනුව සද	ලා
සැකුදෙවිදු රඹ කොරණ මවා	ලා
කල්වලු පොල්වලු වට බන්ද	ලා
පොල්මල් රැක්මල් බැද පිහිටා	ලා

42

අහසේ ඉර හඳ පහන් ලබා	ලා
පොළවේ මිහිකන කලස්දර	ලා
සකොසින් සැම දෙවි දිවස් බලා	ලා
මෙලෙසින් කෙළියට ආසිරි දී	ලා

\* *Dichrostachys cinerea*.

43

හාගලොවෙන් පේරැස්ද ගෙණේ	න්	නේ
රුසිවරසින්හෙන් වෙළුවද දු	න්	නේ
කදකුමරුන්හෙන් රිකිල්ල දු	න්	නේ
පන්මක මුලලා අහ බැදග	න්	නේ

44

අන් කෙළියට රන් මන්ද එපා	ද
එම විගසට රන්මන්ද කොසින්	ද
රන්මදු ගන්නට හසිය එපා	ද
ජට උපාසක් කියනු කොසේ	ද

45

ජනකුලේ රෙඞියාගෙන් හ	න්	නේ
එලහන් මිහන් වරද ගෙණේ	න්	නේ
බඹසට වක්කර මදු ගලන	න්	නේ
සියක් පොටක් මදු අං වර දු	න්	නේ

41

God Viṣmakarma made the horn-pulling post;  
The arch of plantains, God *Ṣakra* raised,  
With bunches of palmyrah and cocoanut fruit,  
Entwined with flowers of cocoanut and *ruk*.\*

42

Brightly shone sun and moon that tide,  
Earth's goddess bore *kalas†* in her hand,  
All the gods with divine eyes beholding,  
With gladness bestowed blessings on the sport.

43

From the *Nāga* world *péres‡* were brought,  
*Vehuva§* was given by the *Risis*,  
Strong *rikilla||* by *Kandakumarū*;  
To a *patmaka* root the hooks were joined.

44

"For horn-pulling sport is not *raṇ-manda* needed?  
Where at this time can we find *raṇ-manda*?  
When obtained it must be strong,  
Oh! for some plan (by which to obtain it)."

\* *Myristica Horsfieldia*, Bl.

† A pot with cocoanut flower inserted, on which a light burns.

‡ Double-link noose.

§ Lit., "bandage": creeper, &c., for tying the horns.

|| The cross sticks of "horns", fastened to the nooses.

45

The low-caste Rodiyá was called ;  
Ox and buffalo hide thongs were brought,  
And twisted into *madu* of a fathom length ;  
A hundred *madu* coils were given for horn-pulling thongs.

The price of the *madu* settled (46)

47

සැමදෙව් පාලන උඩුපිල සිට	ලා
පත්තිනි මිහිකන යටිපිල සිට	ලා
එක කහ අත්තක් සුරන වඩා	ලා
අත්දර දහසම බිඳිම කියා	ලා

48

දහස් ගණන් අං බිඳ වාදය වෙ	වි	වි
වෙනස්වෙලා සිට ලැජ්ජ වෙ	වි	වි
නයිනඩි පාලන ලැජ්ජ වෙ	වි	වි
දිවස් බලා පත්තිනි දුක්වෙ	වි	වි

49

මාගේ හිමිසඳු උරණ නොව	න්	නේ
මාගේ නෙදබල පැමි බොල	න්	නේ
දෙපිලට සරයේ දිනුන් කිය	න්	නේ
කියා පතිනි දෙව් වරද මුද	න්	නේ

47

All the gods with Pálanga were on the upper side,  
Earth's goddess and Pattini were on the lower side ;  
Taking a saffron root in her right hand,  
" I will break the thousand *andara* hooks " cried (Pattini).

48

Breaking thousands of hooks the contest grew (hot),  
And (Pálanga) standing aloof was shamed,  
Even to death was he shamed,  
And Pattini by her divine power aware, felt pity.

49

" O! my love, be not angry ;  
My majestic power I displayed,  
Both parties were alike victorious,"  
With gentle words she pacified him.

After thus pulling horns at *Wellassa*, and breaking 100,000, two only remained ; these they bore to *Bintenna* (50) Stanza 51 ; *Mayiyangana*, the city of three gold spires, known as *Baraṇes*, to rid it of curses. Crossing the *Mahaweli-ganga*, and surmounting " the hill of stone steps," with joy they beheld the lights of *Dumbara* (52) ; then passing the two

*Denuwara* they reached *Senkaḍagala* (Kandy), and, dispelling all ills there (53) stood upon the horn-pulling meadow (*an-pitiya*).

54

අංපිටියක් සරසා	ලා
සත් දවසක් අං කෙළ	ලා
පෙරහැර පැත් වක්කර	ලා
මෙලෙසින් උවදුරු ඇර	ලා

A meadow they decorated for pulling the horns,  
And pulled horns for seven days,  
Then sprinkled (the country) with *Perahera pen*,\*  
By these means dispelling diseases.

Thus were all evils driven to the great ocean (55).

56

මානබලා බැඳගණ එක එ	ලේ	ලේ
ගාණ සදුන් පිතිදිය එක එ	ලේ	ලේ
නැල්ල තාන කරලාගණ බෙ	ලේ	ලේ
උවදුරු ඇර සෙසි මෙමව මුඵ	ලේ	ලේ

57

ආලවඩන සුසිරු අංකෙලි	යේ
කහලි නැතුව අන් කෙලියොන් සරි	යේ
සත් පත්තිනි දෙව් උවදුරු ඇරි	යේ
ලෙඩක් ඉතින් නොතිබෙයි ගමහරි	යේ

56

Duly the horns are measured and tied ;  
Daubing (their bodies) with lines of sandal wood unguent,  
And putting *tella* and *tana* ornaments round their necks,  
They marched through the village driving away diseases.

57

Ah! delightful horn-pulling sport, fraught with blessing,  
It is meet to pull horns guilelessly ;  
Goddess Sat-Pattini banished all ill ;  
Henceforth will no sickness rage in the village.

59

වෙසක් මහට පුජා ඇරග	න්	නේ
ඇහැල මහට පෙරහැර කරප	න්	නේ
මැදින් දිනට අං කෙලිය කෙලි	න්	නේ
මෙලෙසින් උවදුරු ලොව ඇරය	න්	නේ

\* Lit., Processional water.

"In *Vesak* month receive offerings,  
In *Ēsala* make processions,  
In *Medindina* hold *aṇ-keliya*;  
Thus will all diseases quit the world."

The remaining Stanzas (60-77) relate in incoherent fashion Pattini's birth and certain incidents connected with the origin of *aṇ-keliya*.\*

The extra verses would seem to cover an alternative version of the former half (Stanzas 1-54) of "*Aṇkeḷi upata*." They commence—

ඉරට කිලට ඇද්ද මෙ	සේ
සඳට කිලට ඇද්ද මෙ	සේ
සදන් පුට්ට මල් තෙව්ම	ට
අපට කිලට ඇද්ද මෙ	සේ

Is the (mighty) sun unclean?  
Is the (gentle) moon unclean?  
Are we also (held) unclean  
To pluck the fragrant sandal flower?

They then proceed to describe the efforts of Pattini and Pálugga to pluck the flower. The gods provide a cord and staff of gold; Pattini spares six of her waist-ropes in succession (for a rope ladder); Pálugga mounts the tree, and on the topmost bough describes "the fiery *champak* flower" (*gini sapu mal*):—

මාදිය කලසක් විලස	ට
සන්තියකන් නැට්ට ඇති ව	ට
දහසක් කැකුළු ඇ	ති
පෙති දහසක් ඉසිරන	ති
බබරුනාද රොන්තණ	ති
දෙබරුනාද බිඟුකෙළි	ති

"Like a huge water-pot,  
With stalk of seven cubits,  
Countless petals surrounding thousand buds,  
There the bee sucks and wasp and hornet sport."

Sandal wood hooks and a gold arekanut-cutter are miraculously forthcoming, and, in striving to reach the flower, the two hooks catch. Unable to unloose them, Pattini and Pálugga weep "till their eyes are red." The god of the sky then sends a thousand of his ministering spirits and the goddess of earth a thousand of her train, to aid in pulling the hooks asunder. Pálugga's hook is broken, and, in wrath, he proceeds in search of horns through the lands of *Holi*, *Kalinga*, *Telinga*, *Kási*, *Bangáli* as far as *Andara-désa*, where he at last obtains a thousand horns. Placing these on the backs of a thousand oxen, he recrossed the sea to

\* These stanzas have probably been interpolated into the original poem, and add nothing to its interest.

*Wellassa*, and there "pulled horns," and collecting the broken pieces into a heap, named that place *Angoda*. With nine remaining hooks, he reached *Navagamuva*, and again "pulled horns"; finally, with but two hooks, he came to *Péradeniya*, and pulled them at *Aṇ-pitiya*.

So far the legendary origin of *aṇ-keliya*, which clearly connects it with the continent of India, whence it may have been imported into Ceylon—possibly under some form unsuited till modified to the nature of the people—with the rest of Hindú rites and ceremonies at present overlying and marring the simpler Buddhism of the Island. For it is not perhaps unreasonable to recognise in the two "horns" *udupila* and *yatipila*, and the ceremonial attending their "pulling," the Singhalese development (albeit unknown to themselves) of that mysterious worship of the emblems of Nature, which from early times has formed an important element in the Hindú cult. The forms in which the *linga* or male nature, the type of *Síva*, the Regenerator, is represented in mystical connection with the *yóni* or *bhaga*, the female power. *Śíva's sakti* or energy, *Párvatí*, are as countless as the names of those gods, and may well have come to assume on Ceylon soil the disguise of united opposing "horns." The struggle of the votaries of "Pálugga" and "Pattini" (? *Mahá Deva* and *Bhaváni*) on the *aṇ-pitiya*, to be witnessed almost any day in one district or other of the Island, recalls a legend related in the *Servarasa*.

"When *Sati*, after the close of her existence as the daughter of *Daksha*, sprang again to life in the character of *Párvatí*, or mountain-born, she was reunited in marriage to *Mahá Deva*. This divine pair had once a dispute on the comparative influence of sexes in producing animated beings; and each resolved, by mutual agreement, to create apart a new race of men. The race produced by *Mahá Deva* was very numerous, and devoted themselves exclusively to the worship of the male deity; but their intellects were dull, their bodies feeble, their limbs distorted, and their complexions of different hues. *Párvatí* had at the same time created a multitude of human beings, who adored the female power only; and they were all well-shaped, with sweet aspects and fine complexions. A furious contest ensued between the two races, and the *Lingajas* were defeated in battle. But *Mahá Deva*, enraged against the *Yónijas*, would have destroyed them with the fire of his eye, if *Párvatí* had not interposed and appeased him: but he would spare them only on condition that they should instantly quit the country, to return no more. And from the *Yóni*, which they adored as the sole cause of their existence, they were named *Yavanas*."\*

\* Moor's *Hindu Pantheon*, p. 387.



The *an-keli-pūjāwa* is not complete without the *pēli*, or torch-light procession round the infected villages,—a relic of the primeval worship of Agni, the fire-god, cleansing and hallowing, which has passed into the superstitious observance of widely separated countries, and is not unknown even in Christian England,—witness the Easter fires, those of St. John's Day, Michaelmas, Martinmas, and Christmas. The Midsummer or St. John's Day fires, which were kindled at the season of the summer solstice, were of three kinds: first, bonfires; second, procession with burning brands round the fields; third, wheels blazing and set rolling. The bonfires were lighted for the purpose of scaring away the dragons that poison the waters with the slime that fell from them at that hot season, and therefore bones and all sorts of filth were thrown into the fire that the smoke might be the fouler and more offensive to the dragons. "Need fires" especially have retained their heathen character unaltered, and are for the most part not confined to particular days.

They used to be lighted on the occasion of epidemics occurring among cattle, and the custom is still observed here and there to this day. Wherever it can be traced among people of German or Scandinavian descent, the fire is always kindled by the friction of a wooden axle in the nave of a waggon wheel, or in holes bored in one or two posts. In either case the axle or roller is worked with a rope, which is wound round it, and pulled to and fro with the greatest possible speed by two opposite groups of able-bodied men.\*

The axle working in the nave is equally symbolic of Nature's creative energies, and the two forms of worship existed side by side in England, certainly up to the thirteenth century. Kemble ("The Saxons in England") quotes from the Chronicle of Lanercost for 1268 A.D. how "certain bestial persons, monks in garb but not in mind, taught the country people to extract fire from wood by friction, and to set up a 'simulacrum Priapi' as a means of preserving their cattle from an epidemic pneumonia.†"—B. *Hon. Sec.*

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\* Kelly, *Indo-European Folk-lore*, p. 48.

† *Id.*, p. 50.